

It is to be established outside hospital or training-school jurisdiction for its broad general effect. It is to be central, bounded at first by natural or geographical divisions, later by the need and ability to establish greater numbers, but never exclusive.

The plan, based on the relation of the preparatory school to the training-school.

The term, one school year.

The curriculum, arranged by a committee of experts, composed equally of nurses and teachers.

Entrance qualifications fixed by the same committee.

A fee, nominal or otherwise, according to the financial status of the school, but always a fee.

The certificate, a blank form filled out by the proper authorities constituting a standard for entrance to a training-school.

The principal of the school to be an ex-superintendent of nurses chosen by the superintendents of training-schools of the territory within which the preparatory school is situated. The choice to be ratified by the trustees.

While the whole scheme as presented is merely a rough outline, it is perhaps enough to show that the undertaking, if not overwhelming, is neither small nor simple.

We are agreed the world over that an innovation is a necessity—something must be done to improve the present training-school system, and we are unanimous also that the “something” is a preparation for the work before undertaking it, the only real difference of opinion being, who shall be responsible for this primary education?

I hope that I have made it clear that while I do not underestimate any of the difficulties, the plan is feasible if the one serious obstacle, the monetary situation, can be overcome.

PREPARATORY WORK AT THE NEW YORK CITY TRAINING-SCHOOL

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For some time past, about two years, it has been very apparent that a preliminary course was necessary for the pupils of the New York City Training-School.

This conclusion was arrived at before any communication was held with other schools which had established a preparatory course. In fact, the officers, three in number, were so busy attempting to do all the

teaching required, both theoretical and practical, that no time was left to inquire what other schools were doing.

The course was two years, the places of the pupils being filled as vacancies occurred, so that there was little uniformity in the knowledge gained by the pupils during the first year, some entering the school in April being placed at work in the wards, and classes for theoretical instruction were not formed till the following August. Pupils sometimes reached their junior examination and failed after being nine months in the school. As all pupils are sent on their emergency service and act as senior nurses during the second year, one can readily see what it means to the school to lose a pupil at the end of her year, as well as what it means to the pupil to lose so much time in gaining a profession.

The practical training of the pupil for the first six months has been very hard. She knows nothing from a nursing point of view. If she enters the school when the classes begin, she does better, for the theory and practice go hand in hand, but if not, the teaching is very one-sided, and she is an element of danger instead of help in the wards.

After careful consideration, it seemed that if a pupil could be taught the theory required of her when she takes her junior examination, before she took up her work in the wards, it would help matters considerably. She could then take up her practical work more intelligently, or in other words, if she knew the language of nursing before she came to reside in the nursing world, it would help every one materially to teach her its habits and customs and protect her new associates from discomfort and possible injury due to her extreme ignorance while adapting herself to her changed surroundings.

We made inquiries, and found there was no school or college giving this teaching to prospective nurses, and we decided to try what could be done for probationers in our own school.

Inquiries were then made at various hospitals, but very little light was thrown upon the subject for us for the reason that no other school was situated as we were, with so much emergency work depending upon us. We were therefore obliged to work out our own plans. *What* we wanted was clear enough, *how* to secure it was another matter, for lack of room and of teachers and facilities for teaching were great drawbacks. But these obstacles are now in a fair way to be overcome, and we expect to put in force our new schedule on October 1.

Our classes will be formed quarterly, all pupils thus starting on the same footing. During the three months each probationer will spend her morning in the wards assisting the side nurses and learning the names and care of ward utensils and furnishings under the care of a post-graduate head nurse; she will spend her whole afternoon in study

under the teachers of the school. At the end of the quarter she will be given her junior examination in anatomy and physiology, materia medica, sanitation and hygiene, dietetics, and practical nursing. The morning hours spent in the wards will give an opportunity to judge of her practical fitness for the work, so that we expect thus to be able, at the end of the quarter or probationary period, to place our uniformed nurses in the wards much better fitted from every point of view to undertake the responsibilities of their regular course. This period of probation is to be included in the regular course.

As so much of our teaching has been done in the evenings, it has been thought better to lengthen the course to three years and put all our work into the day hours, leaving the evenings free for rest and recreation.

How much of a success this will be remains to be seen. We hope another year will see us well established in a preparatory course.

Personally, I do not approve of each training-school doing its own preparatory work. It is a serious tax upon the officers' time and energy and upon the capacity, resources, and finances of the institution which ought not to be borne by them.

Our colleges, recognizing that special preparation must be given to students entering certain professions, such as law, medicine, etc., have made provision for such exigencies. Why cannot nursing be recognized as a profession needing special attention, and young women just making a decision for the future be given an opportunity to go right on and take up this special theoretical course and then enter a training-school later for two years of practical work and the study necessary to make that practice a success.

I think much better results would be achieved both in the care of the patients and the uniformity of the training of the pupils. The officers would have more time to devote to the details of the work, and the absence of expense for teaching and maintaining the probationers and pupils would materially benefit the institutions with which the schools are connected, and, most important of all, with other contemplated reforms carried through, our profession would be put on a recognized basis which would place it beyond criticism.

Should such a course be considered for applicants to our schools, the country is not barren of resources for teachers, for I understand the Teachers' College of New York City is turning out every year women trained nurses, specially adapted for such positions as instructors.